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THE "CRACKER" GIRL.

A Story of the Alligator Country.

A stray chicken wandered aimlessly about a small clearing. Now he stopped to peck at bright pebbles, then hopped forward to examine a bunch of tussock grass. Then a grasshopper attracted his attention. And all the time he was getting farther away from home. At last he paused on the bank of a dark creek and looked about curiously. It was a new world to him. Near by a long black object lay half imbedded in the sand. After watching it a few moments he hopped nearer. Then came a quick flash and snapping of teeth; the chicken's short drama was over. And the alligator's tail slid back into the sand, and his half-closed eyes resumed their air of sleepy unconsciousness.

Overhead magnolias and live oaks mingled their branches, while here and there rose the stately trunks of royal palms. Great masses of azalea, agave and sensitive plants crept up from the water's edge and spread out over the banks. And everywhere clambered the fox grape and bignonia and woodbine.

Beyond the creek and stretching away for a hundred miles to the south and west were the everglades. In the distance gleamed the blue waters of Lake Okeechobee. To the east was a wilderness, to the north twenty miles of almost impenetrable jungle. And in the midst the little clearing, lonely and wild and ugly. For, except where the log cabin stood, near the center, the trees had been merely girdled and now rose white and ghostly, their gray, skeleton arms creaking and groaning with every passing breeze. Among them were long ridges of sweet-potato vines and nearer the cabin a few clumps of gumbo and banana stalks. A tall, solitary oleander in full bloom stood near the water barrel, its fragrant branches nearly hiding one end of the cabin. A little to one side were several neglected orange trees.

The cabin had but two windows, small openings which were closed with boards when it rained. Near one of these a young girl was preparing "comptie." On the stove behind her was the inevitable kettle of hominy. As she worked she occasionally broke into snatches of negro melody, her fresh young voice floating out into the forest and bringing quick responses from mocking birds and warblers.

Two men were working their way through the thick masses of palmetto. Suddenly they paused to listen.

"What a voice!" one of them exclaimed. "A backwoods nightingale."

"It must be old Dobesson's daughter," said the other. "I was here five years ago, and she was then the wildest and happiest little thing I ever saw—all the time in the woods, chasing squirrels and imitating the mocking birds."

Again the voice floated to them. As it died away the first speaker drew a long breath.

"What an acquisition she would be to my rustic chorus," he said.

His companion laughed.

"There you go again! Never a fine voice but you must be covetous. The penalty of being a theater manager, I suppose. But really, Danielson, you must not wake the ambition of this child of nature. She is like the birds, and New York would stifle her."

A few moments later they emerged from the palmetto. As they crossed the clearing the young girl left the window and appeared in the doorway. For a moment she merely looked curious, then a glow of recognition crept into her face. Before they had time to speak she sprang down the steps with outstretched hands.

"Mr. Lowery, fer all ther worl'!" she cried, her eyes sparkling with pleasure. "Hit's mighty pleasan' ter see yeh roun' agin. Paw'll suttingly be glad ter see yeh."

"And I shall be glad to see him, Liza," said Mr. Lowery, heartily. "We've had some rare hunts together. But how you have grown. You were only a little girl when I left."

"An' like fer somebody ter make her bows an' arrers an' go huntin' 'cooters.'"

Mr. Lowery smiled.

"We did have some fine 'cooter' hunts," he said; then, nodding toward his companion, added: "I've brought my friend, Mr. Danielson, down to try alligator hunting. I tell him your father is probably the best 'gator guide in south Florida."

The girl's face clouded.

"Paw's in right pore shape," she said, slowly. "He war los' in the ev'glades an' got the shakes pow'ful bad. I 'low he cay'nt do no mo' guidin' fer er long time."

The two men looked at each other in perplexity. Seeing this, the girl hastened to add:

"Cleb kin guide you uns better 'n anybody 'cept paw. He ain't but twelve years ol', but paw says what he don't know 'bout 'gators ain't wuth takin' lessons on."

But Mr. Lowery looked doubtful.

"I remember Cleb," he said, "but it strikes me that he would be a rather small chap in case of an emergency. A twelve-footer would be apt to take advantage of him."

"Paw says Cleb kin git away with mos' anythin'. He 'lows he ar quicker nor lightnin'."

"Very well, we'll try him, of course. It is thirty miles to the nearest settlement where a guide could be found. Now, suppose we go in and have a talk with your father."

An hour later Cleb came in, a small, freckled-faced boy with quick, sharp eyes, which seemed to take in everything. Soon after appeared Mr. Lowery's man with the camp equipage.

"I suppose we can have the old camp site by the creek?" Mr. Lowery inquired.

"Suttinly, suttinly!" responded Mr. Dobesson, heartily. "You uns act jes' like yeh war't home an' he'p yo'seifs. There's rafts o' gyarden sass an' melons spilin'."

Before night the camp was ready, and late in the evening the two men with their young guide went down the creek for a preliminary "brush" with the alligators. And it did not take long to discover that the girl's praise of her brother was justifiable. As Mr. Lowery's man said, he was a "peeler." Before many days the two men expressed themselves as perfectly satisfied with his services.

As the days went by the relations between the house and camp grew more intimate. Mr. Danielson was an enthusiast in his profession and found the voice of the young girl fully as attractive as alligator hunting. Day after day he listened to her singing and often accompanied it with his own rich voice. A little practice and her quick ear caught the opera airs; even her teacher was sometimes surprised by the exquisite rendering which her superb voice gave to them, and the more he listened the more he was resolved to take her back with him to New York.

"I would like the training of such a voice," he said to Mr. Lowery; "there is rare promise in it."

A few days later they were standing near the cabin, making arrangements for the next day's hunt, when she suddenly snatched the rifle from Cleb's grasp, and, taking quick aim, fired. A heavy crash and scream almost instantly came from the undergrowth near the camp.

"Hit's a wildcat," she said, in explanation. "'Twar a-making fer you uns' tent. I 'low hit smelt vittles."

And, sure enough, an immense cat was found under one of the live oaks. As Mr. Lowery pointed to the small wound in the base of the skull he looked at his companion significantly.

"You or I," he said, "could never have done this at such a distance."

Mr. Danielson made no reply, but he looked at the strong, lithe figure of the young girl with renewed interest.

"She will be a grand woman some day," he thought. "If only her language was not so barbarous."

But as the weeks went by even her language seemed less harsh to his ears. Sometimes her quaint expressions seemed positively charming. And her eyes were so brown and deep—so frank and open—what mattered a few oddities of expression?

One day Mr. Lowery took him to task.

"You must go slow, Danielson," he said, kindly. "You are but twenty-five, and Liza is no ordinary girl. But you know the impossibility."

For a moment his companion made no reply; then he raised his eyes slowly.

"Yes," he said, quietly, "I know the impossibility. I have convinced myself of it a hundred times. The girl is absolutely ignorant; a 'cracker' in the extreme sense of the term, while I am—what books and money have made me. And yet," he continued, after a pause, "as soon as I convince myself of its absurdity I am sure to beg into make plans to take her north and give her an education. With her capacity, an education would be a matter of little difficulty."

"But you must have her consent, and—excuse me—the whole plan is idiotic."

"I know it."

A moment later he arose and walked toward the cabin. Mr. Lowery watched him curiously.

"I fancy our alligator hunting is about over," he thought.

The next afternoon, as the two were practicing duets together, Mr. Danielson asked the girl, in a matter-of-fact tone:

"How would you like to go north and study music, Liza?"

She raised her eyes frankly. This was one of her attractions—she never showed embarrassment or self-consciousness.

"I use ter 'low I'd like ter learn things right much," she said, simply; "but sen' paw's been sick an' money skase I've gin hit all up. Hit mus' be gran' ter know things like you uns."

There was a wistfulness in her voice which he took instant advantage of.

"If you could arrange to go north with us," he said, eagerly, "you would have a chance to learn everything. My mother would look after you, I am sure."

"Hits too late—an' thar's other things."

"What?"

But at this moment Mr. Lowery came up. With him was a tall young man in rough costume.

"Excuse the interruption, Danielson," said Mr. Lowery, "but I want you to know my friend Norton. You've heard me speak of him. My guide among the Keys—saved my life off Anclote and nearly lost his own."

Mr. Danielson advanced cordially. He had heard many stories of this brave guide—this Apollo among the cowboys.

But before he could grasp his hand a lithe figure sprang before.

"Oh, Bob! We didn' 'spec yeh 'fore orange-pickin'." Then, turning about, she added, with a charming air of proprietorship: "Hit's my Bob."—Waverly Magazine.

A Man's Inconsistencies.

A man will wade through two feet of snow to go to a dog fight, but six inches of the stuff will keep him away from church.

A man will get up at four o'clock in the morning to go fishing, but will calmly allow his better half to build the fire before he does so.

A man will spend half a day reading the latest French novel, but let his wife request him to read a chapter from the Bible to the children and immediately his eyes become unfit for use.

A man will tramp the hills and vales from daybreak to sundown in search of the wily rabbit and consider it exhilarating exercise, but he will kick like a new shotgun when his wife asks him to take the baby out walking on Sunday afternoon.—N. Y. World.

—Soon Remedied.—Dick Hicks (to dentist)—"My jaw ached when I came here, but now it has stopped." Molar (grasping forceps)—"We can soon remedy that."—N. Y. Herald.

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—Prince Ippolito, a nephew of Prince Borghese, has entered the Jesuit order in Rome, and has taken the oath of poverty and humility. He is a young man, only just turned 18, and is a millionaire. Of course his vast wealth will go to the order.—Philadelphia Times.

—America, through the American board, expended in fifty years $1,250,000 to evangelize Hawaii, and has during that time received about $4,000,000 a year in trade. England's missions are said to bring back ten pounds in trade for every pound given to convert the heathen.—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

—A speaker at the recent international congress showed by experiments upon school children, when three or four sums in arithmetic were given in succession, that each sum showed an inferiority to the previous one, both in correctness and as regards the time in which it was completed. This one faculty employed was gradually exhausted, a fresh piece of evidence showing the necessity for diversity of work.

—In the Roman Catholic church, in the sixth century, it was ordained that no commemoration should be made in the Eucharist for such as committed self-murder. This ecclesiastical law continued till the Reformation, when it was admitted into the statute law of England by the authority of parliament, with the confiscation of land and goods. Till 1823 the body of the suicide was directed to be buried in a cross-road, and a stake to be driven through it.

—The American Sunday-school union makes the following report of its work during the three years last March. It has in this time established 5,261 new Sunday-schools in needy or destitute communities, into which were gathered 22,887 teachers and 186,017 scholars. The results in conversions and the development of churches from these schools is 14,981 conversions and the organizing of 335 churches. This work costs about $90,000 a year, and reaches those who are not provided for by any other agency.

—Mrs. Ellen M. Richards, who is instructor at the Boston Institute of Technology, never misses an opportunity to get all the housewifely science she can into the heads of the big "tech." boys. "They'll need it some time," she says, eagerly, and with one of her bright smiles. "All girls do not marry, but there are precious few boys who don't. And I mean to make these boys competent instructors in case they get incompetent wives. They'll know a great deal more about housekeeping than the men of this generation."

—A curious custom of the Greek church was illustrated at the funeral the other day of the young Grand Duchess Paul of Russia. Before the coffin was closed the metropolitan placed a written paper in the right hand of the corpse, which read: "We, by the grace of God, prelate of the holy Russian church, write this to our master and friend, St. Peter, the gatekeeper of the Lord Almighty. We announce to you that the servant of the Lord, her imperial highness, the Grand Duchess Paul, has finished her life on earth and we order you to admit her into the kingdom of Heaven without delay, for we have absolved all her sins and granted her salvation. You will obey our order on sight of this document which we put into her hand."

EVILS OF TEA AND COFFEE.

Extract from a Lecture by Dr. J. H. Kellogg, of the Battle Creek Sanitarium.

Poets talk of the "cup that cheers but not inebriates," referring to either tea or coffee, but these drinks do inebriate, and if they cheer, it is only an evidence of inebriation. Tea and coffee do, on a large scale, what wine does on a small scale, because they are much more extensively used. There is a club in London which meets every Saturday night to have a spree on tea, and some of them get under the table before they get through. Less than two years ago two Boston girls were arrested for being drunk and disorderly. They swore that they had taken no liquor, and no proof could be obtained that they had. But on investigation it appeared that they had acquired the habit of chewing tea, and carried it to the excess of intoxication. A doctor told me a short time ago that his first case of delirium tremens was that of an old lady from tea-drinking, and it is known that inveterate teatopers do reach this stage of intoxication sometimes. I knew of a man some time ago who had delirium tremens from the use of tobacco.

A physician to one of the large manufacturing establishments in New England told me of a curious disease which once broke out among the employes. Sometimes fifteen or twenty girls were seized with delirium during the day and would have to be carried home and the disease seemed at first quite puzzling. At length it was discovered that tea-chewing was prevalent among the employes, and that they brought a supply daily in their pockets. The girls were sent home to recover, and when they resumed work, it was necessary for some time to search them every morning to make sure that they did not take up the evil habit. There is more drunkenness in a cup of tea than in a like quantity of lager beer, as has been proven by actual analysis. Tea and coffee are more serious intoxicants than alcohol, because they are more generally used. Their evil results are not generally recognized, but some of the most serious of nervous disorders are born of the use of tea and coffee. Many people go through life partially intoxicated on tea from month to month and from year to year, and a very large proportion of them are women.—Reported by Helen L. Manning.

Over a Back Fence.

Neighbor Woman—Your dog was chasin' our chickens this mornin', an' I jest want you to understand that's got to stop right now.

Mrs. Mild—I did not see the dog out of our yard.

Neighbor Woman—He wasn't. The chickens was in your yard.—Good News.

THEY HAD A DANCE.

It Did Not Appear a Surprising Thing to the Resident.

After dinner one of the village officials came over to the hotel and informed me that there was going to be a dance that night out in the country about four miles, and asked me if I didn't want to attend.

"Is that the same dance I heard them talking about last evening?"

"Very likely."

"The Stevens boys are going to be there?"

"Certainly; they live out that way."

"And the Jones boys?"

"They'll be there."

"And is there a young man named Burt Robinson?"

"Oh, yes; he clerks in the post office."

"And is there another named Alf Williams?"

"Yes; he runs a saw-mill out here."

"And there's a girl around here somewhere called Jennie, isn't there?"

"Exactly; she's my daughter."

"Well, I guess I won't go."

"But why? I can promise you a splendid time."

"Well, the Stevens boys and the Jones' boys were both in town this forenoon buying revolvers for the dance, and I heard that Burt Robinson was going to stick a big bowie-knife into Alf Williams if he asked Jennie to dance with him. Something was also mentioned about someone shooting old Scott if he showed up, and about picking a fuss with young Livingston and shooting him full of lead."

"Is that all you heard?" he asked.

"Isn't that enough? I don't want to be killed out there."

"Colonel, don't be captious," he earnestly remarked, "there's going to be dancing, in course, and we want you to lead the Virginia reel. There's goin' to be shooting, in course, and we have reserved a place for you right at the back door where you can tumble out the minute anybody whoops. The boys will be disappointed if you don't come."

I didn't go, however. Next morning I was inquiring for my friend of the day before, and the merchant whom I interrogated replied:

"I reckon they hain't toted him in yet."

"Did anything happen him last night?"

"He just happened to be killed out thar' at the dance, 'long with two others, and they do say that there was seven wounded."—Detroit Free Press.

WANTED AN OPINION.

The Old Man Was Afraid He Had Paid Too Much.

We had been talking in a general way in the smoking-car, when an oldish man with a very innocent expression of countenance suddenly turned and said:

"Gentlemen, I've been sort o' looking around Chicago for three or four days, and I kinder imagine I got swindled in buying a watch. Here it is, and I wish you'd look at it and give me your opinions. I haint traveled around much, and I don't know many of the tricks of a big, bad city, and I hate to think I don't know 'nuff not to bite at a swindle. Just look it over and tell me what you think."

It seemed to be a gold watch and the movement seemed to be all right, but the first man who took it in hand investigated for a moment or two and said:

"Well, old man, if you paid more than twenty-five dollars for that thing you've been bitten."

"I hev, eh?"

"I should say," observed the second man, after a thorough investigation, "that if I had my choice between a twenty-dollar bill and this watch, I'd take the bill. I've seen better ones at eighteen dollars."

"What's your opinion?" asked the old man, as he handed it to a third.

"Humph! You won't get mad?"

"Oh, no."

"If you have been swindled you want to know it?"

"I do."

"Well, sir, I used to be agent for a factory in Connecticut which turned out better looking watches than this at eight dollars apiece to the trade."

The old man settled back in his seat and set himself to thinking with a peculiar expression on his face. We left him alone in his misery, as we thought.

An hour later, I sat down beside him and asked:

"How much did you really pay for that watch, anyhow?"

He pulled out his wallet, hunted out the bill and showed me the figures. The price of the watch was four dollars and a half, with a guarantee on the bill for one year.—Jeweler's Circular.

Our Home Life.

Look at our home life. We should not forget that though they are ours without price, the good things of our homes have not been without cost to those to whose love we are indebted for them. We have but to think of the love that sheltered our infancy and guided our feet in tender years, and of the self-denial and sacrifices, the toils and watchings, the care and anxiety, the loss of rest, the broken nights, the planning, the praying, the weeping, and all the cost of love—for love always costs—along the days of childhood and youth. Then oftimes much of the good in our homes has come down from the past, the fruit of the labor and suffering of a line of ancestors. Thus every comfort and joy and beauty should be sacred as a sacrament to us because it has been gotton for us by hands of love, at cost of toil and saving and pinching economy and self-denial.—Detroit Free Press.

During the Water Famine.

Fifth-Avenue Nurse—The children want to know, ma'am, if they can wash their faces.

Fifth-Avenue Matron—Certainly not Marie. This is Fido's day for a bath.—Judge.

—"There is the poultice; put it on his stomach." "But I thought you said that it was his heart that was affected, doctor." "Well, you always reach a man's heart through his stomach, don't you?"—Pharmaceutical Era.

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

—A book has been written purporting to trace the descendants of Pocahontas down to this day, and President Harrison is in the list. He, according to this book, is her great-great-great-great great-great-great-great-grandson.

—A western author whose work is attracting much attention in Boston, where he now lives, is Mr. Hamlin Garland. He was born in Iowa and is of Scotch blood. His work is chiefly devoted to the hard, pathetic life of the prairie and the farm.

—James Lane Allen, the Kentucky writer, is a tall and slender man with a grave face. He can tell a story at a dinner table as well as in a printed volume. He looks somewhat like the typical pedagogue, and, in fact, began his career as a teacher.

—Miss Mabel Cahill, the champion woman lawn tennis player of America, is of Irish parentage, her father being a country gentleman in Kilkenny. She is rather pretty, the beauty of her eyes being particularly noticeable, and her figure is slender and supple.

—James Russell Lowell, when lecturing to the students of Harvard university a quarter of a century ago, was wont to preface his remarks with the words: "Gentlemen and Fellow-Students." Many a Harvard graduate to-day remembers the grateful encouragement those four words engendered.

—The Society of California Pioneers proposes to get from each living member a full record of his life, with details of the settlement and development of the section which he chose as his home and facts in regard to his business or professional career. It is believed that such a record will be invaluable to future historians.

—The artists of Germany deeply mourn the death of Heinrich Lang, the painter of animals and battle-scenes, which took place recently in Munich. Lang was a pupil of Friedrich Voltz. During the Franco-Prussian war he was attached to the staff of a Bavarian commander and witnessed personally the scenes which his brush subsequently so perfectly portrayed.

—The old duke of Nassau, who at seventy-five is hale and active, has a fortune of $25,000,000, and is consequently set down as the richest prince in Europe. Much of his wealth represents the profits of the Wiesbaden Casino, and for many years the royalties from the gaming-tables there flowed into his pockets in a veritable stream of gold. Besides that, in the old days he exacted a tax for every visitor to the springs.

—A friend, who at one time enjoyed the intimate acquaintance of William Ross Wallace, the author of that very popular song, "The Sword of Bunker Hill," writes that Mr. Wallace once told him that he was paid just $10 for that piece of composition. He said, further, that Mr. Wallace encountered upon the platform of the Cooper institute, at a later day, Lowell Mason, who wrote the music for this song, and had the curiosity to ask Mr. Mason what he was paid for his share of the production. The latter answered that he received $10 also. Thus author and composer were placed on terms of strict equality. The piece netted many thousands of dollars to its publishers.

HUMOROUS.

—Mamma—"You seem to be in a hurry." Little Frances—"Yes, ma'am; if I hadn't tum so fast I wouldn't det here so soon."

—Young Lady Patient—"Doctor, what do you do when you burn your mouth with hot coffee?" Doctor—"Swear."—Plutarch's Decameron.

—Goslin—"Aw, I have a vewy bad headache this mawning, doncher know." Cuspid (a dentist, absent-mindedly)—"Why don't you have it filled?"—Greenburg Sparks.

—That Was Why.—"Mr. Piggery, of Chicago, isn't a physician, is he, Duane?" "Oh, no." "Then why do you address him as 'Doctor'?" "He cures hams."—Pittsburgh Chronicle.

—A young lady, giving evidence in court the other day, was asked by the lawyer how she learned music. "By teaching it," was the candid and ingenuous reply.—Once a Week.

—He Was Not in It.—(At the door.)—Book Agent (briskly)—"Is the man of the house in?" Mr. Meeker (cautiously)—"Well—er—no. She's just stepped over to a neighbor's."—Pittsburgh Bulletin.

—A Sad Case.—Wallie—"Whither away, me boy?" Chollie—"Got to see me physician about me appetite. I'm so beastly hungwy in the mawning that I don't weally need me bitters at all."—Indianapolis Journal.

—The Practical View Of It.—De Girling—"Now, if I should tell you I have been engaged to nine girls before you what would you say?" Miss De Witt—"That a diamond ring will go far toward depriving the information of its poignancy."—Jewelers' Weekly.

—"John," said Mrs. De Porque to her husband, "have any cranks been to see you this week?" "Never been one near me," was the reply. "That's too bad." "Why?" "Mrs. Lieflarde says three have been to see her husband since Christmas. The first thing you know, people will think the Lieflardes are richer than we are."—Washington Star.

—How Old She Was.—The attorney in the case was very spry and he was not making it any pleasanter for the witnesses than he could help. "How old are you?" he asked of a lady who was called to testify. "I'm old enough," she replied with exceeding promptness, "to know that it is miserable bad manners for a man to ask a lady how old she is." The court let the answer stand.—Detroit Free Press.

—Out of Rhyme.—A country editor, who is also the poet as well as the pressman of his paper, is in trouble, and as with other poets, he learns in suffering what he tells in song. He has sent in this on a postal card:

I long have known that creditor
Is perfect rhyme for editor;
And yet, somehow, my creditor
Won't always rhyme with editor;
And that is why this editor
Would love to change his creditor.

—Detroit Free Press.

FARMER AND PLANTER.

ALL COTTON FARMING.

The Silent Influence of Empty Pocket-Books that Will Prompt More Diversified Farming in the South.

The low price of the fleecy staple naturally brings up the subject of diversified farming in the cotton states. This is not new. It is agitated whenever the price gets down to or below the cost of production, and is forgotten as soon as it rises a few points above. This is history. The fact is that every cotton planter is not in a like position. The true home of the plant seems to be the rich, alluvial lands along the river and sea coast. But it will thrive also on the uplands bordering such lands, and even extends into some of the limestone lands in Tennessee. The lowland planter will answer when you advise him to deversify his crops, that his land is adapted to cotton and not to any other crop. He thinks the upland planter should first stop raising cotton and devote his land to other crops to which they are as well adapted. This seems quite reasonable and is no doubt acted upon along the line where cotton at 7 or eight cents proves to be unprofitable. Production is a pendulum that swings to and fro over the line of profitable culture of cotton. Just now it swings too far toward extended cultivation and the regulator, price, will cause its return. It is seldom that agitation of the question accomplishes its purpose. We call to mind the efforts of the organized burley tobacco growers to limit planting a few years ago. A few conscientiously signed an agreement to limit their acreage. More took part in the agitation, but made preparations for enlarging their area of planting. But the majority, perhaps, looked on, determined, if there was really going to be much of that "foolishness," to double their crops, if possible. This would no doubt be about the result should cotton-planters organize for the purpose of reducing acreage. There is a silent influence in empty pocket-books that will cut off more acres than all the noise of organized effort. Let farmers once know that present rates are unremunerative and they will quit—beginning where the lands are the least adapted to its growth and best suited to other crops and to live stock raising. It would be unreasonable to ask the lowland planter to give up or even curtail his crop when his land and labor could not be turned to other crops. His neighbor, on the uplands, could profitably grow grain, grass and raise live stock, all of which would be readily purchased by the cotton planter. In this way enough of the staple for commercial wants would be grown, and the border farmers, if the term is admissible, would be the richer from the better prices obtained for their grain, hay and meat, all of which would find a home market.

This will be the result, no doubt, of present low range of prices, and it will come from the silent influence rather than from agitation of the subject.—Farmers' Home Journal.

DOES FARMING PAY?

The Answer Depends Largely Upon Men and Methods.

In the face of all that has been said and written in the last year or two about agricultural depression, high taxation, debts, mortgages, class legislation, trusts, monopolies, "it onmes, ad infinitum," it would appear to be tempting criticism even to ask such a question as this. Still I do ask it and shall try to answer it. In the meantime, lest some good-natured critic shall say, "Common Sense" is writing about something he knows practically nothing about, I wish to say I have been a practical farmer for many years, having raised a crop every year since 1856. I have no other occupation, and no other means of making a living. I say, further, I have made farming pay, and can make it pay now, but not to the same extent as a few years since. Does farming pay? I say, with equal truth, it does not. Then there must be more than one kind of farming. Yes, and more than one kind of farmers. It is said there are fewer failures among farmers than in any other class of business men in proportion to the number. Now, if this is true, does it not follow as a sort of corallary that the average profit in farming must be at least equal to the average profit of other legitimate callings? I say legitimate because it is not fair to compare a plain, plodding profession like farming to speculative callings, conducted for "revenue only," without regard to the honesty of methods. I do not know if it be true, but I see it is stated, that less than ten per cent. of the merchants and other trading classes succeed. Now, if this be true, the average profit among these classes must be very small. And here is where a great mistake is often made; in our estimates we count only the successful men who get rich and take no account of the ninety per cent. of failures. It is not my purpose now to go into details about the kind of farming and the kind of farmers that do not pay. They can be easily found. I may say negatively, the successful farmer is not generally found among the loafers about the cross-roads store, blacksmith shop or saloon, nor among the chronic grumblers, complainers or "calamity howlers."

Before I answer the question directly I wish to make another statement, and it is this, that a great many farmers keep no accounts, make no estimates of what the farm really does do, and not giving the farm the proper credits, conclude it does not pay when it does. Take an example: A fairly industrious and prudent man owns and works a farm worth, all told, with stock and implements, say $5,000. Out of this he gets a comfortable home, plenty to eat, good clothes to wear for self and family, sends his children to school, has a nice conveyance to carry his family to church on Sunday, leisure to attend his grange and alliance meetings, and occasionally go to town or other places of agreeable resort. But overlooking all these credits due to the farm, simply because at the end of the year he has no surplus money, he, in his disappointment, cries out, farming don't pay. Let us see about that. Try him and his capital at something else. Capital, $5,000; interest, at 7 per cent., $350; his own wages at anything he knows how to do would not exceed $300. That would give him $650 out of which to rent a house, buy everything he and his family eat and wear, pay schooling, keep a horse and buggy—in a word, get all the comforts and conveniences he had on the farm. It can not be done out of his income, and still his capital has paid 7 per cent. in addition to all he could earn. Now the fact is, the farming did pay probably better than any other business he was capable of conducting, and, in addition, a great deal less risk.

I have just reached the point where I modestly tell how farming can be made to pay. But I have already taken up too much of your valuable space and must reserve what I have to say further until another time, or I could not expect recognition.—Cor. Farmers' Home Journal.

Farm Work For Winter.

It was one advantage of the old time system of farm work that it made plenty for the farmer to do in winter. If nothing else there was at least always the clearing of the forest and its preparation for cultivation to be done. It did not pay much, but it increased the value of the farm, and so indirectly gave better wages than one farmer in ten can now make. It is the do-nothing policy that is ruining thousands of farmers. They simply consume all that they produce in summer. To get ahead under such a plan of operations is simply impossible. Every farmer should by feeding stock or in some other way calculate to earn something in the winter. If more farmers did this farming would be more profitable than it is.—American Cultivator.

HERE AND THERE.

—A first-class morning meal for fifty fowls is very quickly and easily provided by pouring two gallons of boiling water over one gallon of corn-meal; put in some salt and stir well.—Farmers' Home Journal.

If you live on a farm, raise potatoes, sort them for market; if you don't know what to do with the small ones, try boiling and mashing them and feeding to your chickens while hot.—Farmers' Home Journal.

—A fruit farm requires more energy and watchfulness than a farm for live stock and grain. But occasionally the receipts will be immense, and, with care, the average will be well sustained near a first-class market.—Farmers' Home Journal.

—Owners of valuable horses should be careful not to keep them shut up in too warm and close stalls this time of year, for plenty of good fresh air is one of the best things to prevent serious attacks of epizootic and other blood disorders that are so prevalent.—Rural World.

—The idea that the earth must be moved deeper to produce great crops is not a fact of universal application; no more is it that the exhausted surface soil can be improved everywhere and always by burying it for a year or two beneath ten or twelve inches of infertile soil plowed up from below.—Rural World.

—Luckily for the prosperity of the whole country the question of roads has at last been taken up in America by thoughtful men who are full of enthusiasm. It has been enthusiasm that has accomplished every reform of every-kind since the first reform was made, and enthusiasm will some time bring good roads.—Rural World.

—Strawberries need manure, water, culture and mulch. Each is important in order to grow the crop. When grown they must be picked and shipped by an honest transportation company to an honest commission man or firm. All along the line one has a chance to lose. Eternal vigilance is the word—not guess work.—Farmers' Home Journal.

—The first glimpse of a farmer's homestead gives us an index to the character of its inmates. No matter how plain the dwelling, if it be adorned with flowers, vines and blossoming shrubs, we know that it is the abode of taste and true refinement. Nor does this necessitate any great expenditure either of time or money.—Country Gentleman.

—Better work may be done by the plowmen of the west, but it must be under the eye of the farmer, who, by practical experience, knows how it ought to be done, and has a reason why. It does not follow that we are a lot of chunk-heads because we do not plow deeper always and everywhere, and yet better plowing would be good everywhere.—Rural World.

—Some one says there are three things that our common schools should be compeled to do: First, get the young in love with land and home; make home so intensely interesting that the children prefer it to all else; second, teach them to make agriculture profitable, and, third, make farm life intellectually and morally on a level with the best possible life elsewhere.—Rural World.

—An orchard of trees carefully planted and cultivated, each tree erect, well pruned and shapely, is a handsome sight, particularly when in blossom and when loaded with fruit. It speaks for itself, and it speaks for the owner. An honest commission man also speaks for himself, and a swindling one speaks through his fine clothes, rings and jewelry, and swell talk.—Farmers' Home Journal.

—Clover hay, early cut and properly cured, contains 8 per cent. of albuminoids or flesh-forming elements, and good, bright straw from wheat, oats or barley contains 3 per cent., while good timothy hay contains about 1½ per cent. Therefore, one ton of clover hay and one ton of good straw would have, when mixed, almost exactly the feeding value of two tons of the best timothy hay.—Rural World.